

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	3123
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Department:	Strategy and Resources
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Subject:	Commissioning of a service to provide befriending and hosting for families with children at the edge of care.
Total Value:	£345,000 over four years (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To grant a dispensation from contract procedure rule 5.1.1 for operational reasons in accordance with financial regulation 3.29 in order to extend the current contract with Safe Families for Children for a period of up to four months at a maximum total value of £25 0002. To approve the procurement of a contract for the provision of services to families with children at the edge of care for a period of up to four years and a maximum total value of £320,000.3. To delegate authority to the Director of Children's Integrated Services to award the contract.4. To delegate authority to the Head of Contracting and Procurement to sign and enter the contract.

Reasons for the Decision(s) Total maximum value of decision: £345 000 over four years
Following the success of the three-year Partnership Agreement with Safe Families for Children and Dartington Social Research Unit, approval is sought to procure a similar service for up to four years in Nottingham. It is proposed that the service will run for two years, with the opportunity to extend for one year and a possible further year.
Safe Families for Children currently provide early-help and edge-of-care approaches targeted at supporting Nottingham's most vulnerable children and families. The service has demonstrated a reduction in the flow of children into care and has improved outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children. Social care professionals report an increase in the resilience of families that, in turn, has enabled children to live safely at home.
The current agreement is due to expire on 31 March 2018. Approval to procure a similar service is therefore requested in order to enable Nottingham City Council to continue to support vulnerable families and reduce the flow of children in the care system.
The Director of Children's Integrated Services is keen that there is no break in service, therefore approval to extend the arrangements for a further maximum of four months at a maximum value of £25 000 to cover the period to the beginning of the new contract is sought. This will allow uninterrupted delivery of support whilst the tender for a similar service is concluded.
The procurement of a similar service through a competitive tender process is recommended in order to secure the best value for Nottingham's citizens.

Other Options Considered: Not to extend the contract for the interim period. This option is not recommended as time is needed to allow for completion of the tender process and transition to the new arrangements and this will not be completed in time for commencement on 1 April 2018. This option would therefore result in a gap in service.
Not to commission a similar service. This option is not recommended on the basis that non-delivery of a similar service may increase the flow of children into care and reduce the resilience of families.
Over the last three years, a range of alternative approaches to reduce the number and cost of children in the care system has been considered as part of the Children's Big Ticket. This resource donation, befriending and hosting approach has reduced the flow of children into care in Nottingham.

Background Papers: Dartington Social Research Unit (2017) Safe Families for Children Evaluation Report July 2017

Published Works: None

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: None.

Dispensation from Financial Regulations: Yes

Consultations:
Date: 01/04/2016
Other: Citizens that used Safe Families for Children.
Focus groups with citizens formed part of the evaluation of the Safe Families for Children Programme.

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications:
As the proposed programme aims to help families become more resilient, have better support networks and support parents, it is anticipated that the programme will have a positive impact in terms of crime and disorder.

Equality:
Please login to the system to view the EIA document: 180212 Final EIA.docx

Social Value Considerations:
The service will be based locally and will:
1) Provide volunteering opportunities.
2) Make use of local assets and resources and
3) Carry out activities for the benefit of local communities.

Decision Type:
Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:
Yes

Call In Expiry date:
05/04/2018

Advice Sought:
Legal, Finance, Procurement, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:
The proposal set out in this report does not raise any significant legal issues. The original agreement with Safe Families for Children was approved under DDM 2085. The proposed value of the contract, including the extension period remains below the relevant financial thresholds in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. A short extension for the purpose of maintaining continuity of service provision can therefore be supported on this occasion.

Legal Services will provide advice and support with regard to the new procurement process as may be required and will advise on the appropriate contractual provisions.

Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 06/02/2018. Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 12/02/2018.

Finance Advice:

The proposal requests an extension to the contract with Safe Families for Children. The contract is due to expire on 31 March 2018 and to avoid a break in service; approval is required for an additional four months at a maximum contract value of £0.025m.

In relation to the extension, the proposal seeks dispensation from Contract Procedure rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulations 3.29 and is appropriate in these circumstances.

Furthermore, there will be an undertaking to procure a similar service initially for two years, with the option to extend for 1+1 yrs. The contract value for this period is a maximum of £0.320m (£0.080m per year).

The contract is funded from the External Placement budget through reductions in the average rate of external placement costs. This is predicated on the assumption of a baseline cohort and excludes growth that is funded through the MTFP.

The budget pressure mitigation is monitored through the Children Big Ticket Programme.

Christine Green
Strategic Finance - Childrens & Education

Advice provided by Christine Green (Senior Commercial Business Partner) on 22/03/2018.

Advice documents: To commission a service hosting for families with children.docx

Equality and Diversity Advice:

The EIA covers all the required considerations pending the proposed procurement process. It will be important that any new process operates to enable diversity and equality of access for future providers Advice provided by Adisa Djan (Equalities and Diversity Consultant) on 02/03/2018.

Procurement Advice:

The proposed procurement of services for children at the edge of care will be undertaken by the Procurement Team through a compliant process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and UK and EU Regulations.

The proposed extension of the existing arrangements with Safe Families for Children for up to 4 months will allow for continuity of services to vulnerable children during the procurement process therefore dispensation from Contract Procedure Rules (5.1.1) in accordance with Financial Regulations 3.29 (operational reasons) is supported from a procurement perspective. Advice provided by Nicola Harrison (Procurement Lead Officer) on 12/02/2018.

Signatures

David Mellen (PH Early Intervention and Early Years)
SIGNED and Dated: 23/03/2018

Alison Michalska (Corporate Director for Children and Adults)
SIGNED and Dated: 23/03/2018

Theresa Channell (Head of Corporate and Strategic Finance) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations
SIGNED and Dated: 27/03/2018

Chief Finance Officer's Comments: